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ABSTRACT

The role of participant attitudes in the effectiveness of two teacher education program types, English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) and intensive English programs (IEPs), are discussed. Three factors are viewed as influencing participant attitudes: professional separation of ESL and IEP instruction as fields of study; physical separation of ESL and IEP programs and teacher trainees; and unrealistic expectations of ESL and IEP teachers. It is argued that IEPs are often afforded lesser status in higher education in general, with college students in IEPs often not earning academic credit and the faculty teaching in (IEPs) often not attaining full faculty status. In addition, ESL teachers are seen as unaware of/uninterested in their IEP counterparts' professional development activities or ideas about teaching. Physical separation of trainees in the two program types and lack of recent classroom experience on the part of ESL teacher educators tend to promote attitudinal separation. Limited length of ESL programs and IEPs and differential scheduling of the two programs within one institution are also seen as disadvantageous. Separation of teacher trainees into distinct programs is therefore found counterproductive. Suggestions for developing and maintaining constructive attitudes among teacher educators in both program types are offered. (Contains 7 references.) (MSE)

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ATTITUDES AND ACTIONS: TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS IN ESL AND IEPS
SUNSHINE STATE TESOL 22ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE WORKSHOP
PRESENTER: DR. SAMUEL S. PERKINS

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RATIONALE FOR WORKSHOP

Nonconstructive attitudes exist between many educators in teacher preparation programs in English as a Second Language (ESL) and in Intensive English Programs (IEPs) (Clarke, 1994; "Fostering Common Ground," 1996; Perkins, 1997; Stern, 1983; Wallace, 1991). These attitudes warrant acknowledgment and examination because people generally act on the basis of their attitudes. If these two groups of educators act on these attitudes, the result will be relationships between the two groups that are not beneficial to all involved parties--including the students of both types of programs.

REASONS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF NONCONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDES BETWEEN EDUCATORS IN TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS IN ESL AND IN IEPS

I. Affective Separation of Educators in Teacher Preparation Programs in ESL and in IEPs

A. IEPs usually occupy lower statuses--when compared to the statuses of teacher preparation programs in ESL--on individual campuses and in higher education in general

1. When compared to other fields of study, ESL is in its infancy and has not attained the status of more-established disciplines.

2. Characteristics of IEPs

a) IEPs often do not give academic credit to students for completion of courses.

b) IEPs are "often preadmission in the institution's view; that is, they are prerequisite for study in the student's major and so are seen as comparable to remedial or enabling programs in English and mathematics, for example, for American students" (Staczek & Carkin, 1984, p. 3). Byrd (1994) states that IEPs

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> that exist at a university in units other than the central academic division are not ever going to be considered central to the mission of the institution.... The traditional IEP and the traditional faculty of IEPs do not fit the profile that makes for high status within a university. (p. 32)

c) Since IEP instructors are usually native speakers of the language they teach, "the profession and the qualifications for teaching in it are often viewed as gratuitous" (Staczek & Carkin, 1984, p. 3) by colleagues in higher education. IEP educators are often not considered as members of the faculty by these colleagues. Educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL often perceive educators in IEPs as "lesser beings" ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996, p. 57) because the latter usually "don't have PhDs, so of course they should teach more and work more hours. They should do the pedagogical prep, not because they're more qualified, but because they're less qualified" ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996, p. 57).

d) Many educators in IEPs have positions that are noncontinuing and nontenure eligible in nature. "IEP faculty, often marginalized, overworked, and underpaid, feel exploited and temporary (and often are both)" ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996, p. 57) and are considered second-class citizens by many educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL (Perkins, 1997).

3. Lack of awareness/interest on the part of educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL toward IEPs and IEP educators

a) Often, educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL are not aware that IEP educators publish and present at conferences--"doing things that faculty do, but doing it with a more practical orientation" (Perkins, 1997, p. 109).

b) Educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL often do not exhibit interest in what IEP educators have to say about teacher preparation. Members of the former group offer such remarks as "Don't tell me what people need. Don't tell me that we're doing a bad job" (Perkins, 1997, p. 107) and "We know the way to do it" (Perkins, 1997, p. 108).

II. Physical separation--which often results in affective separation--of educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs

A. Teacher preparation programs in ESL and IEPs are often housed in different departments and buildings on a given campus.

1. Teacher preparation programs in ESL are usually housed in departments such as education or linguistics.

2. IEPs can be found in various and sundry locations such as "departments of continuing education, departments of English or linguistics, foreign language departments, international programs or may even be established as units with autonomy, such as centers or institutes" (Staczek & Carkin, 1984, p. 8).

B. Many educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL have not "recently" been in ESL classrooms.

1. Tenure and promotion temptations have lured many educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL away from the classroom practice of language teaching (Clarke, 1994).

2. Clarke (1994) contends that this disassociation of educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL from language classrooms is a byproduct of the nature of professions in technologically advanced, modern, Western societies. He writes of the information overload in such societies making it impossible for persons to have knowledge of every topic that impacts their lives. He states that out of this information overload arises the need for experts or specialists--in this case, educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL--"whose business it is to explore some areas more deeply than others" (p. 14). Such exploration is usually a full-time endeavor.

III. Unrealistic expectations of educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs

A. Teacher preparation programs in ESL are limited in length.

1. Many IEP educators believe that graduates of teacher preparation programs in ESL should and will be fully prepared to teach in any ESL setting. "You can't give somebody 10 years' worth of experience in a 2-year master's program" (Perkins, 1997, p. 96).

2. Many educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs believe that the former type of program can be all things to all people--in other words, fully address all of the varied teaching and learning needs of the diverse students in these teacher preparation programs.

B. Time and effort required to develop and maintain constructive working relationships between educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs

1. Both educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs usually have very busy schedules.

2. There are differences between teacher preparation programs in ESL and IEPs. These differences often include different schedules; "IEPs meet different days of the week at different times than the regular university schedule" (Perkins, 1997, p. 106). Therefore, scheduling enough time for interaction between educators in these two programs can be problematic.

3. Even if there is a great deal of interaction between educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs, "it's not easy to understand the pressures or interests of others jobs/career/positions" ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996, p. 58).

SUGGESTIONS TO DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN CONSTRUCTIVE ATTITUDES BETWEEN EDUCATORS IN TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS IN ESL AND IN IEPS

I. Develop and maintain ongoing contact, cooperation, and open communication between educators in teacher preparation programs and in IEPs

A. Both groups of educators get together to discuss topics such as their programs, attitudes--including those of a nonconstructive nature--, students, missions, curricula, expertise, fears, similarities, differences, needs, goals and how the two groups of educators can help each other achieve their goals, and constraints on a constructive working relationship between the two groups ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996; Perkins, 1997).

> It would be nice to formulate a set of agreed-upon goals and values.... And so, the two parts need to meet and talk about what their individual goals and values are and see if there are common ones that can be met. (Perkins, 1997, p. 113)

Such an "interactive dialogue" ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996, p. 116) will help educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs to know each other and each other's programs better, which should improve the working relationship between the two groups.

B. Educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL teaching courses in IEPs

1. This enables educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL to see firsthand the changes in materials, students, and teachers in an ESL class that have occurred since these educators taught in such a class--if indeed they have taught in such a class.

2. Provides opportunities for interactive dialogues between educators in teacher preparation programs and in IEPs

C. Educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs switch positions for a specified period of time ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996).

1. Enable the members of the two groups to develop empathy for and understanding of each other

D. Educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs team teach courses ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996).

1. Can help to heal "the rift of IEP people feeling underappreciated for the knowledge and skills they have" ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996, p. 35)

2. Provides opportunities for interactive dialogues between these two groups of educators

E. Teaching assistantships and internships in which students from teacher preparation programs in ESL teach in IEPs

1. Gives these students firsthand knowledge of teaching in an ESL classroom, and they can share this knowledge with their instructors in teacher preparation programs in ESL.

2. Provides opportunities for interactive dialogues between educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs

F. Educators in IEPs can make presentations in classes in teacher preparation programs in ESL ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996).

1. Can help to heal "the rift of IEP people feeling underappreciated for the knowledge and skills they have" ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996, p. 35)

2. Provides opportunities for interactive dialogues between educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs

G. Educators in teacher preparation programs and in IEPs can visit each other's classes ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996; Perkins, 1997).

1. Provides opportunities for interactive dialogues between these two groups of educators

II. Educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs treat each other with respect as equals and professionals "who have a common goal, and the goal is to improve the teaching and learning of English whether you're doing it directly through an English-language program or through a teacher education program" (Perkins, 1997, p. 111).

III. The statuses of IEPs--on individual campuses and in higher education in general--should be as similar as possible to the statuses to teacher preparation programs in ESL.

A. On-campus teacher preparation programs in ESL and IEPs should be in close physical proximity to each other--in the same building and department if feasible--to facilitate ongoing contact, cooperation, and open communication and to give the tangible message that the two programs do indeed share the goal of improving and teaching and learning of English (Perkins, 1997).

IV. Educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs need to have realistic expectations.

A. Teacher preparation programs in ESL are limited in length and can not totally meet the varied teaching and learning needs of their diverse students. A more realistic expectation might be that educators in these programs can prepare their students for the practice of ESL teaching to a point by providing them with the tools they can employ "to find their own way" (Perkins, 1997, p. 84) in this practice in diverse settings. Perhaps, it is more realistic for educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs to consider a degree from the former type of program as a "license to begin learning" ("Fostering Common Ground," 1996, p. 62) rather than as evidence of a graduate of such a program being fully prepared to effectively teach in any ESL setting.

B. Educators in teacher preparation programs in ESL and in IEPs need to have realistic expectations about the amount of time and effort required to develop and maintain constructive working relationships between them and have the desire to allot this time and effort in order to make such relationships realities (Perkins, 1997).

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